

U.S. Patent Application No. 09/787,741
Attorney Docket No. 236093US

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Proposed Claim Amendments

Claims 1-18 (canceled)

Claim 19 (currently amended): A message exchange for receiving and storing spoken messages and transmitting these messages to one or more subscribers, to whom the messages are addressed, in a public switched telephone network, to which the message exchange is connected, ~~wherein the message exchange comprises~~ comprising:

an address module ~~in order~~ configured to store a plurality of lists with subscriber identifications, ~~the lists~~ each list being assigned, ~~in each case,~~ to at least one subscriber in the telephone network, and, ~~in the address module, certain subscriber identifications in a list of a subscriber being combined into a group~~ at least two lists including a common group identification;

a receiving module ~~in order~~ configured to receive the messages from subscribers in the telephone network via the telephone network and to store them, ~~in each case,~~ together each received message with an identification of the subscriber who has placed the message;

a speech recognition module, ~~which makes it possible for~~ configured to enable a subscriber to ~~determine~~ designate, by means of spoken language, at least one of the subscribers ~~and/or groups of subscribers~~ to whom a message is supposed to be addressed;

a transmission module ~~in order~~ configured to transmit stored messages, by means of an automatic call, to the ~~determined subscribers and/or groups of subscribers~~ designated at least one subscriber, and to inquiry if a reply is to be sent from the designated at least one subscriber to the transmitting subscriber, and

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a reply module ~~for receiving and storing replies of a~~ configured to receive and to store the reply from the at least one subscriber to whom messages are transmitted.

Claim 20 (currently amended): The message exchange according to claim ~~27~~ 19, wherein the speech recognition module ~~makes it possible for~~ is configured to enable a subscriber to create and administer the lists by means of spoken language.

Claim 21 (currently amended): The message exchange according to claim ~~27~~ 19, wherein ~~[[a]] each~~ subscriber identification ~~comprises the~~ includes a name of ~~the a~~ respective subscriber.

Claim 22 (currently amended): The message exchange according to claim ~~27~~ 19, wherein ~~[[a]] each~~ subscriber identification ~~comprises the~~ includes a call number of ~~the a~~ respective subscriber.

Claim 23 (currently amended): The message exchange according to claim ~~27~~ 19, wherein ~~certain~~ at least one of the subscriber identifications ~~are~~ is stored as a voice ~~signals~~ signal.

Claim 24 (currently amended): The message exchange according to claim ~~27~~ 19, ~~wherein the message exchange comprises~~ further comprising:

at least one tariff table, ~~which makes it possible for~~ wherein the transmission module refers to the at least one tariff table to transmit ~~certain~~ messages at times having economical tariffs.

Claim 25 (currently amended): The message exchange according to claim ~~27~~ 19, ~~wherein the message exchange comprises~~ further comprising:

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a table with statistical information on the traffic load in the telephone network, ~~which makes it possible for~~ wherein the transmission module refers to the table to transmit ~~certain~~ messages at times of low traffic load.

Claim 26 (currently amended): The message exchange according to claim ~~27~~ 19, wherein the reply module ~~can~~ is configured to receive a reply, and to store and transmit~~([,])~~ to ~~[[the]]~~ addressed subscribers~~([,])~~ messages from ~~[[a]]~~ the at least one subscriber to whom messages were sent, ~~which the messages can be being~~ addressed to a group of subscribers.

Claim 27 (currently amended): The message exchange according claim ~~27~~ 19, wherein ~~a list also~~ at least one of the lists contains access rights.

Claim 28 (currently amended): A method of ~~receiving and storing~~ handling spoken messages, ~~and transmitting these messages to one or more subscribers~~ in a public switched telephone network, the method comprising~~([,])~~:

storing a plurality of lists, with subscriber identifications, in a message exchange connected to the telephone network, ~~the lists~~ each list being assigned, ~~in each case,~~ to at least one subscriber in the public switched telephone network, and ~~certain subscriber identifications in a list of a subscriber being combined in a group~~ at least two lists including a common group identification;

receiving, in the message exchange, ~~messages of subscribers~~ a message from one of the subscribers in the public switched telephone network via the said public switched telephone network ~~and, wherein the subscriber originating the message is a transmitting subscriber;~~

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~~storing, in each case, together with the message and an identification of the transmitting subscriber, who has given the message, subscriber's address messages to subscribers and/or groups of subscribers by;~~

~~designating to the message exchange the respective subscribers or groups of subscribers~~ name of another subscriber or of a subscriber group by means of spoken language;

~~identifying[[,]] an address of the designated subscriber or addresses of the designated subscriber group by use of a speech recognition module and at least one of the plurality of lists, the list of the respective subscriber, the said subscribers and/or groups of subscribers designated by the subscriber;~~

~~transmitting[[,]] by means of an automatic call with the message exchange[[,]] the stored messages~~ message to the ~~identified subscribers and/or groups of subscribers~~ designated subscriber or subscriber group; [[and]]

~~inquiring the designated subscriber or subscriber group to determine if a reply message is to be sent to the transmitting subscriber; and~~

~~receiving and storing, by means of the message exchange, replies of a~~ the reply message from the designated subscriber, to whom messages were transmitted or subscriber group when the reply message to be sent.

Claim 29 (currently amended): The method according to claim 36 28, wherein ~~certain~~ at least one of the subscriber identifications are is stored as a voice signals signal.

Claim 30 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 36 28, wherein further comprising:

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storing status information is stored concerning the transmission of messages to subscribers[.]; and

retransmitting messages not successfully transmitted ~~can be repeatedly~~
~~transmitted during first attempts.~~

Claim 31 (currently amended): The method according to claim 36 28, wherein
further comprising:

monitoring at least one tariff table ~~is monitored;~~ and
transmitting certain messages ~~are transmitted to addressed subscribers at~~
economical tariff times based on monitoring of the at least one tariff table.

Claim 32 (currently amended): The method according to claim 36 28, wherein
further comprising:

storing statistical information on the traffic load in the telephone network ~~is stored~~
in a table[.]; and

transmitting certain messages ~~are transmitted to the addressed subscribers~~ at times
of low traffic load based on the stored statistical information.

Claim 33 (currently amended): The method according to claim 36 28, wherein
~~certain messages are transmitted,~~ further comprising:

transmitting the message via the Internet.

Claim 34 (currently amended): The method according to claim 36 28, wherein
~~messages,~~ further comprising:

receiving the reply message from [[a]] the designated subscriber to whom
~~messages were sent, are received as reply or from one of the subscribers of the designated~~
subscriber group[.];

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~~stored and transmitted to the addressed subscribers, which messages can be~~
~~addressed to a group of subscribers~~

storing the reply message in the message exchange; and

transmitting the reply message to at least the transmitting subscriber.

Claim 35 (currently amended): The method according claims 36 28, wherein
~~certain subscribers administer~~ the transmitting subscriber administers at least one of the
lists by means of spoken language.

Claim 36 (currently amended): A computer-readable data carrier, ~~which contains~~
comprising:

~~coded data representing a computer program, which makes it possible to control~~
be executed by a processor controlling a message exchange according to claim 27 in such
a way that it carries out a method according to claim 36 connected to a telephone
network, wherein when said computer program is executed, the message exchange
performs steps including,

storing a plurality of lists with subscriber identifications, each list being
assigned to at least one subscriber in the public switched telephone network, and
at least two lists including a common group identification.

receiving a message from one of the subscribers in the public switched
telephone network via the public switched telephone network, wherein the
subscriber originating the message is a transmitting subscriber.

storing the message and an identification of the transmitting subscriber;

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storing a name of another one of the subscribers or of a subscriber group provided to the message exchange from the transmitting subscriber by means of spoken language;

identifying an address of the designated subscriber or addresses of the designated subscriber group by use of a speech recognition module and at least one of the plurality of lists;

transmitting by means of an automatic call the stored message to the designated subscriber or subscriber group;

inquiring the designated subscriber or subscriber group to determine if a reply message is to be sent to the transmitting subscriber; and

receiving and storing the reply message from the designated subscriber or subscriber group when the reply message is to be sent.

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